

For The Better by OTTSTF

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: F/M

Language: English

Characters: Dustin Henderson, Eleven | Jane Hopper, Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Troy (Stranger Things), Will Byers

Relationships: Eleven | Jane Hopper/Mike Wheeler, Maxine "Max" Mayfield/Lucas Sinclair

Status: Completed

Published: 2018-04-05

Updated: 2018-04-05

Packaged: 2022-04-21 15:34:48

Rating: Teen And Up Audiences

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 3,401

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

Never did he think he'd have any sort of respect for any of those... *losers*, as he used to call them.

Not once did he imagine himself feeling guilty for something he'd done to them.

One action, one day, triggers a sudden change.

He changes. He's not sure who he is any more.

What he does know is that he'll never forgive himself.

Hopefully, they might.

For The Better

Author's Note:

So this.

This...

I'm not sure what to think.

I've never seen a story from Troy's POV, and I feel that, at *that particular moment*, he becomes hella OOC.

Basically, please give feedback on this one. I'd love to know what you think.

Who the hell does Michael Wheeler - *Frog Face* – God, *did I actually just say his name?* EW – think he is?

Just because his fairy friend's gone and probably topped himself, he thinks he has the right to tell me what I can or can't say?

No. Not over my dead bod-

What the fuck?

What's happening?

What the hell is holding me still?

"Hey look! Troy peed himself!"

What?

Oh my god. What the fuck. Why am I...

Laughter. All I can hear is laughter. All around me. Everyone. Even *James*, probably.

That asshole. Why isn't he doing anything?

Maybe he's not a fan of being stuck in place, forced to piss yourself *somehow*?

Y'know. Maybe he's being *smart*?

It's too much.

All the laughter. Every single person in the room...

Except Frog Face.

And...

Who the hell is she?

Why is she staring at me like that?

As if she wants to kill me?

Probably does, being a friend of Frog Face. She looks fucking crazy.

"What's going on here?"

The gasp of air I take in as I'm relieved of whatever that hold was is huge, and I barely keep myself on my feet.

I look up, and-

They're gone.

She is gone.

It was them. It has to be. I have no fucking clue how, but Frog Face or his hideous girlfriend did it.

I'd love to punch them both in the face.

But no.

Not her.

Not because *'oh no! She's a girl! Can't hit her!'*. Absolutely not. I don't care about that.

If she's capable of holding me still, and making me piss myself, without laying a *single finger* on me...

Yeah. Not a smart idea to try anything towards her.

Unfortunately.

"You want to explain yourself, Troy?"

My head snaps up to the Principle; I can imagine my expression: one of confusion.

I'm the one that was attacked. Go get FrogFace and whoever she was.

I don't say that, though. I suddenly remember what they did. What *she* did.

What the fuck do I say about this?

The reaction from my parents is...
Expected.

My mother scolds me, calling me a stupid child. *What thirteen year old pees himself, Troy?*
My father...

I'm never going to hear the end of it.

I want to kill them.
Frog Face. And that girl. And the rest of those losers.
The mere thought of them turns my stomach.

"El!"

"Eleven!"

"El!"

Is that her name? *Eleven?* How fucking weird is she?

Doesn't matter.
Frog Face. And Toothless. *Alone. In the middle of nowhere.*

Perfect.

Of course they're easy to catch. They couldn't run to save their lives.
Frog Face's legs would probably snap if he tried, whilst Toothless...
Hah.

I can't help but internally laugh my ass off at them. A stick and a

rock. Versus a knife.

Hmm. I wonder who will win.

Frog Face's throw is hilarious, whilst Toothless nearly kills me with internal laughter at his swing.

But now I have him. Knife at the throat. He's at my mercy.

Hold on.

Why throat?

Let's make this loser *actually* toothless.

"Dentist opens in FIVE!"

"FOUR!"

Holy shit.

He actually did it.

He...

Oh shit.

Oh shit oh shit oh shit oh shit oh shit oh shit oh shit oh shit oh shit.

Why would he jump, I wasn't actually going to do it, fuck's sake what's wrong with him.

Oh my god he's dead. He's actually dead and it's all my fault, I'm so fucked. This is basically manslaughter. Assisted suicide? Something but I'm to blame.

No. That doesn't matter. *He fucking jumped. To save Dustin. I...*

I can't believe it.

Not that he jumped. Yeah, I can't believe *that*. But... I suddenly care. I know I've said I want to kill them. So many times. So many times I've imagined it.

But now that I just *actually* watched Mike jump to his death... *because of me...* oh god.

What am I? I'm fucking horrific. That should be me falling right now. Not him. He doesn't deserve it, for fuck's sake. I...

God, I never thought I'd say that.

But I mean it. And that's all that runs through my head as we all forget everything and run to the edge.

His screams... they stab at my ears as we run. Screams as he falls to his death, all because of me.

God. I hope it's death, anyway.

Not because I *want* him to die. No. Quite the opposite now, honestly. I just...

I don't want him to suffer.

I've put him through enough.

He just jumped off a cliff to save his friend.

That...

He doesn't deserve to suffer.

Basically, I want it to be a quick death.

God I'm actually talking about Mike's death... What the fuck is wrong with me.

Except...

He's floating.

Not falling.

He's flailing around as if he's falling, but... *not* falling.

No. He's *rising*.

I feel my stomach sink in relief. I'm shocked, *of course I fucking am*. But it doesn't take two seconds to click in my head how this is happening.

He caused me to freeze in my tracks.
So whatever did that, is now making him fly.

Michael Wheeler. Fucking flying. Flying back to the top of this cliff that I made him jump from.

He lands with a thud, and honestly, the first thing I want to do, is apologise. Tell him I never meant to actually get him killed. Tell him I never would've cut Dustin.

But he looks away, to his left, my right.

I follow.
And it's her.

She's storming towards us, and I don't doubt for a second she'll use her mind to break my neck.
But that doesn't worry me.
No.
I deserve it.

James gets thrown back, and I feel a force pull at my entire arm, bending it into the most unholy shape you could imagine. It fucking kills.

"My arm. She broke my arm!" I blurt out in pain.

"Go." she tells us.

Yep, that's exactly what I'm doing.
Fuck James. He can do what he wants. I am fucking legging it.
As much as I damn well deserve to have all of my bones broken by her, if she's letting me run, I'm damn well going to take that chance.

A chance I didn't think to give Mike. A chance he wouldn't have had, if it weren't for this crazy girl saving his life.

I'm shitting myself. Nearly literally.

I need to go home. I need my parents, and I need a hospital. But, *what the fuck do I say?*

It's not like '*oh, this girl broke my arm with her mind after I told Michael Wheeler to jump to his death*' will do me any good.

But what else can I say?

Falling over doesn't exactly warrant an arm in *this* condition.

I can't think of any cliffs that... *wouldn't kill you*.

Fucking hell.

I've got no choice.

My father, of course, doesn't believe a word. He thinks I got jumped by Mike and Dustin.

Quite the opposite, I want to tell him. But I don't. I can't be dealing with the slaughter I'll indefinitely receive if they find out I damn well nearly killed Mike. I just need to get to the hospital. *Now*.

My mother doesn't question the cause. She's immediately in a panicked rush to get me to hospital. *Thank god*. At least one of my parents have their priorities straight.

She then drags me to the police station. I told her not to. I practically begged, but she'd had none of it. So here I am, preparing for the inevitable laughter that'll be thrown my way from everyone there as I tell them this weird girl broke my arm without even touching me.

Except one of them doesn't laugh.

The chief.

Hopper? I think so.

No. He's immediately caught.

As if he'd heard of something like this.
God, I hope so.

That's all I can think about.

Well, it's the primary subject.
The chief of police wanted to know about this girl. As if he's looking for her.

Has she attacked others?
How long has she been here?
How did she end up befriending Mike and Dustin? Probably the other two as well.

Hold on...

Why did she appear the same time Will vanished?

And now he's back... *she's gone.*

What the fuck?

I don't bother them any more. I want to apologise for everything I'd done. *Honestly*, I do, but Mike... he looks... gone. It's weird. You'd expect him to be happy, now that Will's back. But... he's depressed. Anybody can see that.

Maybe it's to do with whatever happened in the school that night?
Maybe it's to do with that girl?

I've not seen her since...

I shiver as I glance at my arm, still in a cast.

So, no. I don't want to bother him with my precense.

I suck up the feeling of guilt.

At least he's not dead. *Dead because of me.*

Fucking asshole. That's all I am. That's all I've ever been.

About a year later.

They've all missed a few days of school. Even the new girl, *Maxine*?

She's missed a few days too.

I assume it's something to do with whatever's happening to Will.

I don't know much, but I know he's not well. Flashbacks, I've overheard.

I'm not sure what could be so traumatic about getting lost in the woods, but I've doubted that story since it got told.

I probably don't want to know the real story, if it's *that* bad.

The day they're back, they seem.... *odd*.

Like... *more* odd. They honestly seem traumatised. *All of them*.

Mike...

He's different.

He seems more... alive.

As if whatever happened whilst they were gone kicked him back into action.

Is she back?

Is she going to kill me?

I still deserve it.

I still don't intend to ask. Let them be.

The Snow Ball.

I honestly have no idea why I'm here.

I guess I have to be, if I want to uphold my image.

Well. Am I upholding it?

Or am I shitting all over it?

I honestly don't know at this point.

Dancing.

Yeah, not for me.

Maybe in another universe.

But not here.

I hear laughter, and *of course* it's coming from Stacey as she rejects Dustin.

I mean, I can't blame her.

But at the same time, I feel bad for him.

Jesus, what am I saying?

I've gone from hating their guts to feeling apologetic as he struggles to find himself a dance partner?

It's strange, what nearly killing someone does to you.

Lucas and the redhead – *Max* – stand out amongst the crowd. At least one of them managed, I guess.

I guess I'm not too surprised to see Mike sitting alone, too. I guess he's got the brains to not embarrass himself by trying.

Or maybe I spoke too soon.

No?

He's staring at something. His jaw barely followed him as he stood up.

Okay, follow his eyes.

Oh.

She's...

Woah.

She's changed. For one, her hair's suddenly brown. Guess she got tired of blonde?

She's nearly a completely different person. But after having received the scariest death stare from a face, you're bound to remember it.

She's staring back at him.

They start walking towards each-other, meeting in the middle.

Lucky bastard.

I can't *not* admit it. She's... not bad. Mike really scored with that one. *Not to mention she's capable of fucking telekinesis.*

They dance, surprisingly well I guess, and I assume that I look like the biggest weirdo, staring at them like this.

I am trying not to, but I just can't believe it, I guess. This is a far cry from the original Frog Face. Gone is Emo Mike. He finally looks

happy.

Holy shit, he kissed her.
Of all the people to have the balls...

And she's fucking smiling, leaning her head against his.
Goddamnit, Wheeler. You. Have. Scored.

I can't help but follow when they go to leave the room. *Yeah, if I didn't look like a creep before, I definitely do now.*
I don't care. Now that he's happy, I need to get this out of my system.
Maybe, *just maybe*, this could go well, whilst he's in an overjoyed mood.

I approach slowly. They haven't noticed me yet, which is good, I guess. But now I've gotta inform them of my presence, preferably without causing a startle (good luck), and preferably while still at a distance (as if that matters to her).

"Guys?"

They snap to me, and she's off the wall in seconds. I go to raise my hands in a gesture of *'I come in peace'*, but I'm locked in place, just like last time.

Please don't make me piss myself.

"Jane." he says. *Wasn't her name Eleven? Well, I guess she should have a proper name...* He takes hold of her hand.

"Not here, not now. We've got to lay low, you know that."
He's whispering, but not quiet enough for me to not hear.

"But he's the mouth breather." she says, her gaze not shifting away from me. *God*, one twitch and she could snap me in half any second

now. Please, Mike, whatever you've got planned, do it quick.

"Yeah, I know, but we can't risk people seeing your powers." he tells her.

Her eyes flick over to him, and if I weren't frozen, I'm sure I would've shat myself. I can just imagine my neck following her eyes. *Still wouldn't blame her.*

But she lets go.

And, my god, the relief I feel wash through me is immense. I survive to see another day.

After pulling myself together, I swallow. *Hard.*

"I don't want trouble." I start off with, hoping to get that out of the way straight away, before she takes hold of me again.

"Yeah, I bet you don't." he says.

I sigh slightly. "Well, yeah – but not just because of her."

He rolls his eyes. Can't blame him.

"I... actually want the opposite."

His eyebrows raise as he questions my honesty. She's still staring at me, no doubt ready to launch me through a wall I assume.

"I've... been waiting, to say this. It's never been the right time, though. You've been so down this entire year; everyone's seen that."

She now glances to him, with a frown, as if she knew. He looks to her too, and I can only imagine his year-long depression had something to do with her. *An entire year, though? Jesus.*

"To say what?" he hisses, probably expecting some horrible snarl from me.

Well. Here it goes.

"Sorry."

Both of their eyebrows reach for the ceiling as soon as it's out.

"For everything. Literally, everything."

"Excuse me?" Mike questions, shock and surprise written all over his face.

"I... I'm sorry." I repeat.

"For... *everything*." he quotes me, still visibly disbelieving.

"Yes." I confirm.

"Okay... why now? And why the hell should I believe you?"

I sigh. I knew that was going to be asked.

"Listen..." I start.

"Ever since you jumped, for Dustin... I've... been different."

"Oh, so it took me falling to my death for you to realise what a prick you've been all your life?" he snaps.

"I... guess." I admit.

"I know you won't believe me, but I didn't... I didn't really mean for you to jump. I would never have cut Dustin."

"Bullshit." he calls immediately.

"No, Mike, I'm serious. I... just wanted to scare you. It was stupid of me, of course it was. I'm a fucking idiot and I know it."

"Understatement of the year." he announces. *Yeah, I guess.*

"But the second you walked off the edge..."

I hesitate. *I fucking hesitate.*

"I guess that snapped me. I fucking shit myself, Mike."

"Why's that? Because you realised you'd get the blame? You'd go to prison?"

Whilst that was on my mind for a split second...

"No. I was scared for you."

He waits a moment.

"So you *do* have a bit of empathy in there."

I bite my lip. *I deserve every bit of hate from this guy.*

"I guess it flicked a switch. I realised just how bad I was, and the guilt just flooded me. I guess, knowing how much of an ass I've always been, when *you're* willing to damn well jump to your death to save a friend?"

"I'd never have the balls." I eventually finish after a pause.

"I don't doubt that."

" Good." I say.

"But... yeah. The second you started falling, I just wished I could role back time, take back everything I'd ever said and done, because you don't deserve any of it. You never have, and I'm sorry. I'm so fucking sorry, Mike."

I lean against the wall, holding myself up with my hands. I feel like smashing my head against it – return the favour for the years of pain I'd caused, on his behalf. But I just let my head hit the wall once, leaving it there after.

"You're actually being serious, aren't you?" Mike asks.

"I am." I respond immediately. I then leave the wall, turning back to him.

"And, I get it. If you don't want to forgive me, I get it. I don't deserve forgiveness, absolutely not. But I just wanted to get it out. I've kept it bottled up since that moment, I just need to get it out. Hell, even James fucking hates me now; I guess I let a bit of it show."

" *James* hates you?"

"Yeah, said I'd softened up over the year. It wasn't over the year at all; it was the second I thought I'd killed you."

"Jesus." he mumbles.

"Yeah, I know. But here we are, and honestly, I'd love to just forget about everything I'd ever done. But obviously that's not going to happen, so this is second best, and, I mean this, I'll do anything to make it up to you. You're an amazing person, Mike. I realised that the second you jumped. So please, as long as you know that I fucking hate myself over everything I've ever done, I'm good knowing that."

His eyes widen again, hers following suit less so. He takes a moment, but he eventually grabs her hand again.

"Don't tell anyone about her. Ever."

Should've expected that.

"I promise." I respond. "Never. I don't know how, or why you've got fucking superpowers," I say to her, "but I promise you, I'll never mention it."

She doesn't really respond, whilst Mike thanks me. *Thanks me.*

"Secondly, you should share this with the others, too."

"Yeah, I should." I agree. Of course I should.

"Mind... uh, joining me?"

He nods. "I'll try to get them to give you a chance."

I now thank him. God, I hope they do.

To my relief, they do. I tell them exactly the same as I'd told Mike and Elev- *Jane*. They're just as surprised as they were at first, but they come around to believing me, thank god.

We end up conversing for a while, following. It's relieving, to be honest, that these guys are actually willing to let me even exist within ten feet of them after everything.

As the night ends, I feel an ease I've not felt for the entire year. Finally, I've gotten my guilt and self-hatred out to those guys.

I still feel odd, thinking about it. From hating them, to having the stupidest amount of respect for them all. They're all the same, really; each of them would put their life on the line for the other.

Being on their good side is a good thing. That's something I've decided as of today.

I know full well that we're not exactly *compatible*, me versus them. I've never touched Dungeons and Dragons, and video games... Well. Maybe.

I can only hope that one day, I could lose my cowardice, and be brave enough to risk my life for a friend. I do kind of hope that, maybe one day, I'd be somebody that they would want to protect like that.

I couldn't imagine it; I'll never forgive myself for how I'd been, and I know I'll never be as close to any of them as they all are to each other. But a mutual respect, a knowledge that we can help each other, instead of me being the cause of their issues...

That's good. And that's enough.

That's absolutely perfect.

Author's Note:

Like I said.

I am so unsure of what to think.

I hope you enjoyed whatever the hell this is. If you did, please consider leaving your feedback. This one could *definitely* use it.

Thanks to every single one of you ♥